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RHODE ISLAND

HISTORICAL TRACTS.

NO. 9.

*Seaside.*



PROVIDENCE  
SIDNEY S. RIDER.  
1880.

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RHODE ISLAND  
HISTORICAL TRACTS

NO. 9.

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A

TRUE REPRESENTATION

OF THE

PLAN FORMED AT ALBANY

IN 1754,

FOR UNITING THE COLONIES



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1880.

PROVIDENCE PRESS COMPANY, PRINTERS.





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A

TRUE REPRESENTATION

OF THE

PLAN FORMED AT ALBANY,

IN 1754, FOR

UNITING ALL THE BRITISH NORTHERN COLONIES,

IN ORDER TO

THEIR COMMON SAFETY AND DEFENCE.

BY

STEPHEN HOPKINS. 1709-1795.

WITH

INTRODUCTIONS AND NOTES,

BY SIDNEY S. RIDER.

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PROVIDENCE  
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## PUBLISHER'S INTRODUCTION.

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THE Plan of Union, which is presented in the following pages, is no new thing to the student of American history. Mr. Sparks, in his edition of the works of Franklin, has given many pages to its presentation and explanation; Mr. Bancroft, in his History, has also done it ample justice. It is full of interest, and in the light of our subsequent history, it must ever be regarded as one of those "coming events which cast their shadows before." The mass of the colonists were not in favor of the proposition, but leading minds in every colony foresaw the necessity of a unity of action between the colonies, and thus they planted the seed which grew and ripened into fruit a quarter of a century later.

The Plan was in no way more particularly connected with the Colony of Rhode Island than with the other colonies represented in the Convention. She, as did the others, sent commissioners, one of them, Stephen Hopkins, the ablest man of his time within her borders. It became necessary for him to



publish a defence of his action as commissioner. His best defence, as he conceived, would be the presentation of the entire action of the Convention. This he did in the first of the two pamphlets which follow; to it he appended a few pages of personal defence; the reason for its publication was political. Mr. Hopkins was a candidate for the Governorship of Rhode Island, his opponents were using every argument against him, and they seized with avidity upon this Plan, which was obnoxious to many people, hence his "True Representation." This was quickly followed by the second of the pamphlets here presented, "The Short Reply," by an anonymous writer, signing himself "Philolethes." These pamphlets will throw no new light upon the Plan itself, but they are interesting in another way. They are among the earliest, if not the very earliest, political pamphlets issued in the Colony of Rhode Island. They throw light on the political methods of the time, and they present distinctly the arguments used among the people to enlist their opposition to a union. This opposition in a certain sense was not successful, for Mr. Hopkins was elected Governor, and the Colony did not reject the Plan. It neither accepted nor rejected it. But its history will appear as we proceed.





TO THE MEMORY OF

STEPHEN HOPKINS,

A RHODE ISLAND STATESMAN.



STEPHEN HOPKINS was the son of William Hopkins, whose ancestor, Thomas Hopkins, came from England and was assigned land in Providence in 1638. The town of Providence was an undefined tract, including almost the entire northerly portion of the Colony of Rhode Island. Within this town, on the Chopmist hills, or as it was, in the Indian language, Chapumiscook hills, the subject of this notice was born on the 7th March, 1707, O. S.

Touching the early education of young Hopkins there is neither record nor tradition. He had not even the opportunity of an education in country schools, for none existed in that locality. This taunt is thrown at him in the "Short Reply" by Philoletes. In 1726, at the age of nineteen, he was married to Sarah Scott, a granddaughter of that Richard Scott, whose famous letter concerning Roger Williams has brought his name down to our times.



The art of surveying being in a new country one of the utmost importance, Mr. Hopkins labored to acquire it, and became celebrated for the accuracy of his work. In 1730 the town of Scituate was formed from a portion of the territory of the town of Providence, and Mr. Hopkins, at the early age of twenty-three, was elected its first moderator. In 1731 he became town clerk; in 1732 he was sent as a representative to the General Assembly, and was annually re-elected until 1738 inclusive. He was president of the town council in 1735, and was appointed by the Governor, John Wanton, a justice of the peace, and subsequently one of the Justices of the Court of Common Pleas. In 1739 he was employed to revise and correct the maps of Scituate and Providence, and in 1740 he was appointed surveyor of the proprietors' lands. In 1739 he became Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas.

In 1742 he left Scituate and came to reside in Providence, from which town he was immediately returned to the General Assembly. He frequently held the office of Speaker of the House until 1751;



during that year he became Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Rhode Island, to which position he was returned by annual election until he became Governor of the Colony in 1755. In 1754 he was one of the Commissioners to the Albany Convention. In 1753 his wife died, and in 1755 he married a second wife, Mrs. Anna Smith, widow of Benjamin Smith. Mr. Hopkins's name stands first on the petition for the charter for the Providence Library Company, the second library charter granted in Rhode Island, that of the Redwood Library preceding it seven years. From 1755 to 1768 the great political war, known as the Ward and Hopkins controversy, raged with violence. Of these thirteen exciting political years, Governor Hopkins held the office of Governor nine years. In the charter of the Rhode Island College (now Brown University), the name of Stephen Hopkins stands first among the corporators; at its first meeting Governor Hopkins qualified himself as a member of the corporation. He assisted West in his observations on the transit of Venus in 1769, and to him Mr. West has dedicated his account of that event.





He wrote the preliminary chapters of a history of the town of Providence, which were printed in the Providence Gazette, and were afterwards reprinted in the Massachusetts Historical Collections.<sup>1</sup>

In 1765 he published the famous tract, "The Rights of the Colonies Examined," which was reprinted in London.<sup>2</sup> From 1770 to 1775 he

1. An historical account of the planting and growth of Providence is the name given to a series of articles published in the columns of the Providence Gazette. They were written by Stephen Hopkins. The first number of the Providence Gazette appeared October 20, 1762. In it was the first portion of the historical account. Nothing further appeared until January 19, 1763, when the part, first published was reprinted, and new matter added. From this time until March 16, the same year, appeared at sundry times, the history, which was never completed. It was reprinted in the Massachusetts Historical Collections, vol. 9, p. 197. It was highly and very justly commended by Judge Staples. It is the intention of the publisher of these Tracts to reproduce it in the series.

2. The "Rights of the Colonies" was first printed in a quarto pamphlet of twenty-four pages, by William Goddard, in Providence, in 1765. Copies with the same date bear upon the title page, "Published by Authority." This leads to the inference that Mr. Hopkins printed a first edition at his own expense, and later the General Assembly ordered a second edition, upon which the words, "Published by Authority" appear. The following year the pamphlet was reprinted in London, under the title "The Grievances of the American Colonies Candidly Examined." The word "Rights" being considered a little too harsh for English readers. Some copies of this edition contain forty-seven pages, and other copies appear to contain forty-eight pages, but this is owing to an error in paging. In the latter copies, page forty-eight should have been forty-seven.



again represented Providence in the General Assembly. In 1770 he was once more elected Chief Justice of the Superior Court, which position he retained until August, 1776. In 1774 he, in company with his great political antagonist, Samuel Ward, was elected to represent Rhode Island in the Continental Congress; that position Mr. Hopkins held until 1780. Thus was combined in his person, at the same time, three important official trusts—Chief Justice of the Superior Court, Member of the General Assembly, and Member of the Continental Congress. Mr. Ward died in 1776, just previous to the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In 1776 Mr. Hopkins, in company with his colleague in the Albany Convention, Dr. Franklin, signed the Declaration of Independence. He died on the 13th July, 1785, in the 79th year of his age. Such is a brief summary of the life of Stephen Hopkins.

The lack of a good biography of one of her greatest men reflects no honor upon Rhode Island. Sundry sketches by several hands have appeared in various places. These may be mentioned in their



order of publication : Sanderson's, in his Biographies of the Signers ; Goodrich's, in his Lives of the Signers ; Beaman's, in his paper on the Hopkins Family in the Historical Collections of the Essex Institute ; and Wilkinson's, in his Memoirs of the Wilkinson Family.

Errors of various kinds appear in all these sketches. For instance, Sanderson in his account of the Plan of Union says : "The meeting of the delegates was held on the *eleventh* of July, and after the business with the Indians had been concluded, a committee, consisting of one member from each colony, was directed to prepare and report a Plan of Union. The essential principles of the Plan were reported and afterwards agreed to on the *fourth* of July." By reference to the following pages all this will be seen to be quite incorrect. Again, Sanderson says Mr. Hopkins was elevated to the office of Chief Magistrate of the Colony in May, 1756, and occupied this dignified station seven years. This also is quite incorrect. Mr. Hopkins was first elected Governor in May, 1755, and filled the office at sundry times during more than nine years. Mr.



Beaman makes him Governor in 1751, which was not the fact, and makes no mention whatever of the Plan of Union, nor indeed of many of those acts which we should look upon as the crowning glories of his life. Goodrich's may be dismissed with the statement that he simply copied from Sanderson, without acknowledgment; perpetuating the errors of his predecessor, and entirely omitting such parts as will now be looked upon as the most valuable portions of Mr. Sanderson's narrative. Mr. Wilkinson's being the most recent, he was enabled to avail himself of the labors of his predecessors. He has given us many things not before presented in their proper connection, and his is upon the whole the best of the sketches, notwithstanding its errors in dates. Yet it appears that all these writers have failed to give in sufficient detail the main events in the life of Mr. Hopkins, nor can they be adequately presented within the narrow compass of this little tract. It is absolutely necessary to an understanding of his life to note in detail the minute facts with which their papers abound, but it is equally essential that they be correctly stated.





The main circumstances of his career, it seems to us, are that, notwithstanding the utter lack of opportunities for early education, he projected and practically established the first public library in Providence, that his name stands first on the list of those who gave funds to establish Rhode Island College, and that from the establishment of the institution until the day of his death he labored constantly in its behalf. That he was the man who earliest resisted the encroachments of the British crown in matters which concerned the internal government of the colonies. In the deposition of one of the witnesses against him in the case of *Hopkins v. Ward*, it is alleged that he in 1756 used this language: "What have the King and Parliament to do with making a law or laws to govern us by, any more than the Mohawks have. And if the Mohawks should make a law or laws to govern us, we were as much obliged to obey them as any law or laws the King and Parliament could make." \* \* \* At the same time the said Stephen Hopkins further said: "That as our forefathers came from Leyden and were no charge to England, the States of Holland had as good a right



to claim us as England had." That he was among the first who saw the necessity of a unity of action among the colonies, as is shown in his efforts in behalf of the Plan of Union here presented and for the establishment of a central government and legislature for the whole as projected in the Plan, and again referred to by him in the following language at a later period: "Although each of the colonies hath a legislature within itself to take care of its interests, and provide for its peace and internal government, yet there are many things of a more general nature quite out of the reach of those particular legislatures, which it is necessary should be regulated, ordered and governed."<sup>1</sup>

His love of scientific studies is well attested by his labors in observing the transit of Venus, in 1769. The observations made in Providence became famous among astronomers for their accuracy. In publishing his "Account" Mr. West dedicates it to Mr. Hopkins, who, he says, "was pleased to accompany and assist us the whole time that we were preparing for the observation."

1. Grievances of the American Colonies. London, 1765. p. 19.



• • • He proceeds: "Much might be said with respect to your honor's superior abilities in mathematics and natural philosophy, but without flattery, these are the least of your acquirements when compared with your profound skill in civil police and the wise government of a people."

In regard to the emancipation of his slaves, Mr. Wilkinson in his memoir says: "In 1773 he emancipated his slaves, and had in his last will and testament, which was drawn and executed before that date, decreed them liberty at his decease; the year following he secured an act in Rhode Island prohibiting the importation of negroes, and thus put an end to this accursed traffic." We have labored in vain to verify these statements. The last will of Mr. Hopkins was executed the 20th of May, 1781. In it appear these words: "I give to all my negroes their freedom, to take place immediately with respect to those of them who shall be of age, and of the others, the males at twenty-one and the females at eighteen." This certainly proves that the last will of Mr. Hopkins was not executed before 1773, as stated; furthermore, had he given freedom



to his slaves in 1773 it would not have been necessary eight years afterwards to grant them freedom in his will; we fail to find any deed of manumission on the records, hence we conclude the first part of the above statement is incorrect. As to the second portion we find that Mr. Hopkins was a member of the General Assembly in June, 1774, during which month the act prohibiting the importation of negroes was passed. The preamble to the act was a resolution introduced at the town meeting of the freemen in May of that year and passed. It is as follows: "Whereas the inhabitants of America are generally engaged in the preservation of their own rights and liberties, among which that of personal freedom must be considered as the greatest, and as those who are desirous of enjoying all the advantages of liberty themselves. should be willing to extend personal liberty to others, therefore be it enacted," &c. There is nothing contained in the town records to show that Mr. Hopkins was present at the meeting, nor can we find anything to connect him with the passage of the preamble or with the law itself, nevertheless the style is very like his style and the





mode of reasoning is his favorite mode. He may have written it.

Finally his signature to the Declaration of Independence and his labors on the committee which drafted the Articles of Confederation, furnish a fitting close to a career so useful.

These, then, it seems to the writer are the events which in Mr. Hopkins's life stamp him as a statesman. They are the seals upon his patent of nobility and should be the things around which his biographers should longest delight to linger.



## HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

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THE convention which formed the following Plan arose from a request made by the Lords' Commissioners for Trade and Plantations of England. The British Government perceiving a prospect of a war with France and signs of defection among the Six Nations, suggested a general interview by commissioners from the several colonial governments for the purpose of conciliating the Indians and of retaining them in the British interests, and also of devising means of defending the frontiers against the encroachments of the French in Canada.<sup>1</sup> The convention was called to meet at Albany on the 14th June, 1754, and the various colonial governments were invited to send commissioners. The convention met on the 19th instead of the 14th of June,<sup>2</sup>

1. R. I. Col. Rec., vol. 5, p. 385.

2. Franklin's Works, vol. 3, p. 22.



and the following colonies were represented: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland; Virginia was represented by Lt. Gov. De Lancey, of New York.<sup>1</sup> The matter was laid before the Rhode Island General Assembly at their June session, 1754. The session began on Monday, the 10th of that month, and an act was immediately passed appointing two commissioners and defining their powers.<sup>2</sup> This law provided that His Honor the Governor should issue his commission to two persons who should be appointed by the General Assembly. These commissioners were to be empowered "to treat with the other commissioners in the best manner they can to take such measures as will be most effectual to secure and maintain a lasting friendship with the Six Nations of Indians." They were authorized to draw upon the General Treasurer for the sum of one hundred pounds sterling, to be expended in presents to the chiefs of these nations. This sum, however, was neither drawn nor expended. They were further directed to

1. Bancroft's Hist. U. S., vol. 4, p. 121.    2. R. I. Col. Rec., vol. 5, p. 324.



inquire "into what forts are built and building within the limits of His Majesty's dominions in America, by whom, their strength, and situation." They were further directed "to let the commissioners, on behalf of the other governments, know that this government is willing and ready to do anything necessary on their part, so far as they are able, to support and defend the Six Nations of Indians from any insults offered to them by the French or any of the nations of Indians in that part of America." Two members of the Assembly were appointed to draw from the General Treasury the sum of six hundred pounds, old tenor, with which the commissioners were to defray their expenses. If there should not be so large a sum (equal to perhaps five hundred or six hundred dollars of these days) in the Treasury, the two gentlemen, Messrs. Edward Scott and Peter Bours,<sup>1</sup> were to hire

1. These two gentlemen were members of the Literary and Philosophical Society formed at Newport in 1730, out of which grew the Redwood Library. They were both among the petitioners for the charter, and were both members of its first board of directors.

Mr. Scott was its first Librarian, which office he held for three years. He had for twenty years been master of a grammar school at Newport. He was a great uncle of Sir Walter Scott. He was admitted a freeman in 1727,





the same on account and in behalf of the Colony. The Assembly proceeded immediately to an election of commissioners, which resulted in the choice of Stephen Hopkins, Esquire, and His Honor John Gardner,<sup>1</sup> Deputy Governor. The latter gentleman declining the appointment, Captain Benjamin Wickham<sup>2</sup> was chosen in his place, who also

was one of the commissioners to revise the laws of the Colony, which resulted in the Digest of 1744, and again appointed to the same office in 1748; in 1756 he was one of the committee to draft a law for a lottery to raise money with which to rebuild Fort George. He died at Newport in 1768.

Mr. Bours or Bourse, as the name sometimes appears, was admitted a freeman in 1728. His name appears on the petition to the Lords' Commissioners of Trade of England to stop the issue of the Bank of 1731. He was Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1745-6, and was in the General Assembly in either the upper or lower house from 1738 to 1754. He was one of the committee to build the State House in Newport, which is still in use. He was in 1741 to build a powder magazine and to stock it with powder. He served on the Northern Boundary Committee, and in many other ways. He died at Newport in 1761.

1. John Gardner was admitted a freeman in Kingstown in 1722 or 1724, was one of the Governor's assistants (or senators) in 1732, and for several years thereafter. In 1743 he was General Treasurer, which position he held for five years; in 1744 he was made Commissary General, to have charge of all munitions of war. In 1754 he was elected Deputy Governor, and held the office one year. In 1756 the Deputy Governor, Nichols, dying in office, Gov. Gardner was re-chosen, and retained the office until his death, in January, 1764.

2. The first mention of this gentleman, so far as we can find in Colonial affairs, was this election. He was one of the petitioners for the Redwood Library charter, and at sundry times a member of the General



declining, the choice finally fell upon Martin Howard, Jr.,<sup>1</sup> Esquire, of Newport, who accepted the position.<sup>2</sup> To these gentlemen the Governor, William Greene, issued his commission, some paragraphs of which will be found at the beginning of Mr. Hopkins's True Representation. The convention assembled, as before stated, at Albany on the 19th of June. "America had never

Assembly. He was Lieutenant-Colonel of one of the Regiments raised for Crown Point in 1756. He served the town of Newport in the General Assembly for several years; the last mention of him in a legislative capacity appears to be that of 1758. In 1769 he served the Colony as its Naval Officer, having occasion to build a light-house for the Colony, there appears to have been a deficiency in his accounts of upwards of sixty pounds; for this sum the Colony obtained a judgment and execution, whereupon Colonel Wickham applied for a lottery grant to dispose of his farm and pay his debts. This was granted, but finding the tickets moving rather slowly, the Colonel asked the General Assembly to purchase tickets enough in his lottery to extinguish the claim of the State. This was done. The records do not state whether the Colony drew the farm or not.

1. In addition to information concerning Martin Howard, Jr., in the note on page 3 of this Tract, we learn that: "He was married on the 29th of December, 1749, to Ann Concklin, at the house of Major Ebenezer Brenton, the father of Ann, by the Rev. James McSparran, D. D., incumbent of St. Paul's in Narragansett, the parish where the parties do now reside. James Center, of Newport, married a daughter of Mr. Howard. She died, and Mr. Center married another daughter."—*Uphike's Hist. Narragansett Church*, p. 220.

2. R. I. Col. Rec., vol. 5, p. 386.



seen an assembly so venerable for the States that were represented or for the great and able men who composed it.”<sup>1</sup> The time of the convention was at once, and largely, occupied in the discussion of the Indian Questions presented. The delegations from the Six Nations, although not large, yet comprised some of the most distinguished chiefs and orators of the time, particularly Hendricks, who made many speeches before the convention, some abstracts of which appear in the manuscript copy of the Records already referred to. As they are not necessary to an understanding of the pamphlets<sup>2</sup> reproduced we do not here reprint them. After an absence of thirty-five days, the Rhode Island Commissioners returned to their homes,<sup>3</sup> and laid before the General

1. Bancroft's Hist. U. S., vol. 4, p. 122.

2. The two rare pamphlets which form the basis of this Tract were published in the folio form. The first, by Mr. Hopkins, contained fourteen pages, and bears date March 29, 1755. The Short Reply by Philoethes contained six pages, and bears date the 10th of April following. The former was noticed by Mr. Bartlett in his Bibliography of Rhode Island, but the latter appears to have hitherto escaped the attention of Bibliographers. Their form was that of the Acts and Resolves of the Rhode Island General Assembly, and the style of printing the same.

3. The account of the expenditures of the two Commissioners which here followeth presents some items of curious interest, sufficient, as we think, to



Assembly a report of their action, accompanied by a certified copy of the original Record, to which so much reference has been made. Touching the Plan they say: "A Plan of a proposed union of all the said colonies, which, from the facts set forth in said representation (of the condition of the

warrant its reproduction. The Colony appropriated a hundred pounds sterling for presents to the Indians. Two small items only for such uses appear. The long journey on horseback, from Rhode Island to Albany, not less than five days to go and the same to return, the necessary attendance of a young man for the care of the horses, the hire of the horses, the charge per day for the services of the Commissioners, the amount charged by Wendal for board and lodging the two Commissioners, the keeping of these accounts in three kinds of currency, all these things pertain to days that have long since departed from our own time.

## THE ACCOUNT.

## THE COLONY OF RHODE ISLAND TO STEPHEN HOPKINS AND

1754.

MARTIN HOWARD, JR.

DR.

R. I. Old Tenor. Mass. Old Tenor. York Currency.

For expenses going to Albany,	£3 0 0	£9 18 11	£20 11 6
Cash paid Colo. Lydias, -			16 0 0
Cash paid Conrad Weiser for our proportion of provisions supplied the Six Nations,			3 17 4
Cash paid Luttridge, - -			5 6 6
Cash to Mr. Wraaxali, ye Sec'y,			4 0 0
Cash to the Door Keeper, -			10 0
Cash paid Wendal for lodging			2 16 0
Cash paid Colo. Johnson for some belts of wampum, -			16 0





colonies) was judged absolutely necessary to be speedily effected; it was therefore a resolution of said board that the respective commissioners should lay the same before the General Assembly of the colonies they severally represented, which for our parts we accordingly now do." Whereupon the General

Cash paid the Sec'y for a copy of the proceedings of ye Congress, - - -		£3 2 0
Horse keeping, - -		5 10 0
Expenses home, - - - £39 0 0		1 10 0
Cash paid the young man that attended us, - - 34 0 0		
Hire of three horses, - 140 0 0		
Our time and trouble, 35 days each, 60s. - - 210 0 0		
	<u>£426 6 0</u>	<u>£9 18 11</u>
		<u>£43 19 4</u>

## THE COLONY, CR.

By cash received of the General Treasurer, - - - £600 0 0  
Newport, the 14th June, 1755.

STEP. HOPKINS,

M. HOWARD, JR.

New York Currency, £43 19 4; in old tenor, - - -	£443 2 0
Boston old tenor, - 9 18 11; in our old tenor, - - -	14 18 4
Charges in our old tenor, - - - - -	426 6 4
	<u>£884 6 4</u>
Cr. By cash received of ye Colony, - - - - -	600 0 0
Balance due to the Hon. Stephen Hopkins and Mr. M. Howard, Jr.,	<u>£284 6 4</u>

This balance was paid to the two gentlemen in February, 1756.



Assembly "Do vote and resolve, and it is voted and resolved that the foregoing report be, and the same is, hereby accepted; this Assembly nevertheless reserving to themselves a further consideration whether they will accede to the general Plan proposed."<sup>1</sup> No further action was taken in the General Assembly until the following March (1755). It appears in the "Short Reply to Mr. Hopkins's True Representation," later in this Tract that the agent of the Colony in London had written a letter to Governor Greene, dated October 9, 1754, which letter reached the Governor in December, informing him: "That Parliament is like to meet for despatch of business in about six weeks time, when I am apt to think some application will be made to them respecting the Union of the several governments in North America, proposals for that purpose being lately come to hand as they were agreed on by the Congress at Albany." Whereupon the General Assembly directed the Governor to write a letter<sup>2</sup> to the agent in London, "directing him to be upon his watch, and if anything shall be moved

1. R. I. Col. Rec., vol. 5, p. 394.

2. R. I. Col. Rec., vol. 5, p. 424.



in Parliament respecting the Plan for an Union of His Majesty's Northern Colonies projected at Albany which may have a tendency to infringe on our charter privileges, that he use his utmost endeavors to get it put off until such time as the government is furnished with a copy, and have an opportunity of making answer thereunto." The Records of Rhode Island disclose no further action with reference to the acceptance or the rejection of the Plan. Stephen Hopkins was elected Governor of Rhode Island in the following month, and from this time for several years the Ward and Hopkins controversy raged with more or less vigor.

It is related by Mr. Sparks<sup>1</sup> that the Plan was rejected by all the colonial assemblies before which it was brought. This is not, however, correct so far as Rhode Island at least was concerned. In England it was so unacceptable to the Board of Trade that they did not even recommend it to the King. It was doubtless the work of Franklin, who, it was well known, had long before held views favorable to some such arrangement, and had shown

1. Franklin's Works, vol. 3, p. 24.



to gentlemen in New York some "Hints" while on his way to the convention. Touching its rejection on both sides of the sea, Franklin says: "The assemblies all thought there was too much prerogative in it, and in England it was thought to have too much of the democratic." As before stated, the Plan is printed entire in Franklin's Works,<sup>1</sup> and beneath each article the reasons and motives for its adoption.

1. Spark's Ed. Franklin's Works, vol. 3, p. 36, et seq.





*A true REPRESENTATION of the PLAN  
formed at Albany, for uniting all the Brit-  
ish Northern Colonies, in order to their  
common Safety and Defence; containing  
Abstracts of the Authorities given by the sev-  
eral Governments to their Commissioners;  
and of several Letters from the Secretaries  
of State, and Lords Commissioners for Trade  
and Plantations, concerning such an Union:  
Together with a Representation of the State  
of the English and French Colonies in  
North - America; and the said Plan of  
Union, with the Doings of the Commis-  
sioners thereon; and some Remarks on the whole.*

BY

STEPHEN HOPKINS.

PROVIDENCE, MARCH TWENTY-NINTH,

1755.



INSTRUCTIONS TO THE DELEGATES,  
BEING  
EXTRACTS FROM THEIR COMMISSIONS.

---

Paragraph in the Commission given by the Honorable William Greene, Esq. ; Governor of the Colony of Rhode-Island, to their Commissioners.

"I do therefore, by Virtue of an Act of the General Assembly of this Colony, authorize, impower, and commissionate you, the said Stephen Hopkins and Martin Howard, jun.,<sup>1</sup> forthwith to repair to

1. Martin Howard, Jr., was an English gentleman; he came to Rhode Island and was admitted a freeman, in May, 1726. He studied law, and practiced his profession in the town of Newport. Little is known of him previous to his appointment as the colleague of Mr. Hopkins, in the convention at Albany. He was the fourth choice of the General Assembly. Upon the enacting of the stamp act, he was appointed one of the stamp masters for Newport. His



Albany aforesaid, and there, in behalf of this Colony, to meet and join with the other Commissioners, in consulting what Methods are proper to be used, to preserve the Friendship of the aforesaid Six Nations of Indians, and their Attachment to the British Interest in America. And also, what else may be necessary, to prohibit the French, and their Allies the Indians, from encroaching on the Lands within the Dominions of His Majesty. And in general, as far as the Abilities of this Government will permit, to act in Conjunction with the said Commissioners, in every Thing necessary for the Good of His Majesty's

earnest advocacy of the acts of the Crown caused a great popular resentment to manifest itself towards him, and in the riotous scenes of August, 1765, he suffered both in body and estate from the acts of the populace. They first hung him in effigy, and then burned the effigy; then they sacked his house, whereupon he took refuge on board the British Man of War, *Cygnets*, then lying in the harbor of Newport. Thence he went to England, and was immediately appointed by the Crown to the position of chief justice of North Carolina, with a salary of a thousand pounds, sterling, per annum. He returned at once to America, to his post in North Carolina, and presented a claim to the Rhode Island General Assembly for his losses by the riots in Newport, together with his expenses to England, amounting to £270. Little notice was taken of this claim and it was allowed to remain on the table until 1773, when a committee, to whom it had been referred, reported upon it, reducing the amount to about £112. This amount the Assembly ordered to be paid whenever information should be received that the money due from the Crown to the Colony for the



Subjects in those Parts. And to answer as far as we can, the Designs of His Majesty's Instructions to this Colony, communicated to us by the Earl of Holderness.

Paragraph in the Commission given by his Excellency William Shirley, Esq. ; Governor of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay, to their Commissioners.

" And whereas, the Great and General Court or Assembly of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay aforesaid, have elected and appointed you to represent and appear for the said Province, at the Con-

expenses of the latter in the Crown Point Expedition, was to be paid by the Crown. As this claim was nearly twenty years of age, the resolution was equivalent to an indefinite postponement. This was not satisfactory to Mr. Howard, and accordingly the matter was brought up the following year, but nothing appears to have been done in the way of settlement. Among the articles destroyed was a family portrait by Sir Peter Lely. This, with three other portraits, also destroyed, was valued in the inventory of his losses by Mr. Howard, at £35, which the committee considered as being altogether too high, and materially reduced the amount. Mr. Howard does not appear to have been in better favor with the people of North Carolina than with those of Rhode Island. He was driven from the bench in the riot at Hillsborough, in 1770, but his judicial functions did not fully cease until 1771. He left North Carolina in 1777, and visiting Rhode Island, went the following year to England, where he died in 1781, leaving a character but little respected by the best citizens with whom he had been associated in the American Colonies.





vention aforesaid, for the Purposes above-mentioned. As also, for entering into Articles of Union and Confederation, with the aforesaid Governments, for the general Defence of His Majesty's Subjects and Interests in North-America, as well in Times of Peace as War."<sup>1</sup>

Paragraph in the Commission given by the Honorable Thomas Fitch, Esq; Governor of the Colony of Connecticut, to their Commissioners.

"Therefore in Pursuance of the said Act of Assembly, you the said William Pitkin, Roger Wolcot, jun., and Elisha Williams, Esqrs., are commissioned, authorized, and impowered, in Behalf of His Majesty's Colony of Connecticut, to meet the Commissioners appointed by His Majesty's other Governments in America, at Albany, on the 14th of June next; and in Concert with such Commissioners, from His

1. Although a plan of union seems to have been a topic of conversation in some circles, yet none of the delegates were instructed on that point, excepting those from Massachusetts. The instructions of all the others were restricted to a general concert of measures for securing the friendship of the Six Nations and resisting the encroachments of hostile tribes and the French.—Spark's Ed. Franklin's Works, vol. 3, p. 23.



Majesty's other Governments, as shall meet there, to consult proper Measures for the general Defence and Safety of His Majesty's Subjects in said Governments, and the Indians in his Alliance, against the French, and their Indians: And to use and pursue proper Measures in Pursuance of your Instructions from the said General Assembly, relating [to] the Matter aforesaid."

Paragraph in the Commission given by the Honorable Horatio Sharpe, Esq.; Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Maryland, to their Commissioners.

"And whereas, I have had Intimation, that the Commissioners from the several neighbouring Colonies, will receive Instructions from their respective Governments, to concert Measures with the Commissioners from the other Provinces, for the better securing these Indians for the future, in our Alliance, and preventing their being alienated from our Interest, by the Artifices or Insinuations of our Enemies, as well as for the more easy Defence of His Majesty's Dominions on this Continent. You shall, if any Propositions of that Nature are made by the Com-



missioners, in Behalf of their respective Governments, let them know, that this Province is also disposed to contribute to the Execution of any general Scheme to promote such desirable Ends."<sup>1</sup>

Paragraph of a Letter from the Earl of Holderness, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State; dated at Whitehall, the 28th of August, 1753, directed to the Governor and Company of Rhode-Island.<sup>2</sup>

"And whereas, it may be greatly conducive to His Majesty's Service, that all his Provinces in America, should be aiding and assisting each other, in Case of any Invasion: I have it particularly in Charge from His Majesty, to acquaint you, That it [is] His Royal Will and Pleasure, that you should keep up an exact Correspondence with all His Majesty's Governors on the Continent."

1. "Philoletus" in his Reply to Mr. Hopkins's True Representation, complains of the omission by the latter of paragraphs from the Governor of Maryland's Commission, and supplies them. They do not however appear to weaken Mr. Hopkins's case.

2. This letter is printed entire in R. I. Col. Rec., vol. 5, p. 397.



Two Paragraphs of a Letter from the Right Honorable the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations; dated at Whitehall, the 18th of September, 1753, directed to Sir Danvers Osborne, Governor of New-York, and laid before the Commissioners at Albany.<sup>1</sup>

"When we consider of how great Consequence the Friendship and Alliance of the Six Nations is, to all His Majesty's Colonies and Plantations in Ameri-

1. Sir D'Anvers Osborne was a brother-in-law of the Earl of Halifax, and succeeded Clinton as Governor of New York. He arrived on the 6th of October, 1753. "During the voyage across the Atlantic," says Bancroft, "the agitated mind of Osborne, already reeling with private grief, brooded despondingly over the task he had assumed. On the 10th of October, he took the oaths of office at New York, and the people who welcomed him with acclamations, hooted his predecessor." "I expect the like treatment," said he to Clinton, "before I leave the government." On the same day he was startled with an address from the city council, who declared they would not "brook any infringement of their inestimable liberties, civil and religious." On the next, he communicated to the council his instructions, which required the Assembly "to recede from all encroachment on the (royal) prerogative and to consider without delay of a proper law for a permanent revenue, solid, definite, and without limitation," etc. With a distressed countenance and plaintive voice he asked if these instructions would be obeyed. All agreed that the Assembly would never comply. He sighed, turned about, reclined against the window frame and exclaimed, "then why am I come here?" Being of a morbid sensitiveness, honest and scrupulous of his word, the unhappy man spent the night in arranging his private affairs, and towards morning hanged himself against the fence in the garden.—Bancroft's Hist. U. S., 8vo., vol. 4, p. 103.





ca in general, as well as to New-York in particular : When we consider, that this Friendship and Alliance is only to be gained and preserved by making Presents to them at proper Times, and upon proper Occasions ; and by an inviolable Observance of all our Engagements with them : And when we recollect the Attempts which have been lately made, to withdraw them from the British Interest, we cannot but be greatly concerned and surprised, that the Province of New-York should have been so inattentive to the general Interest of His Majesty's Subjects in America, as well as to their own particular Security, as to have given Occasion to the Complaints made by the Indians ; but we are still more surprised, at the Manner in which these Complaints were received, the dissatisfactory Answers given to the Indians, and at their being suffered to depart (tho' the Assembly was then sitting) without any Measures taken to bring them to Temper, or to redress their Complaints. — And this leads us to recommend one Thing more to your Attention, and that is, to take Care, that all the Provinces be (if practicable) comprised in one General Treaty, to be made in His



Majesty's Name ; it appearing to us, that the Practice of each Province making a separate Treaty for itself, in its own Name, is very improper, and may be attended with great Inconveniency to His Majesty's Subjects."

Paragraph of a Letter from Sir Thomas Robinson, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State ; dated Whitehall, the 5th of July, 1754, directed to the Governor and Company of Rhode-Island.<sup>1</sup>

"Although you have neglected to give any Answer to the Earl of Holderness's Letter of the 28th of August last, yet as I cannot doubt of your Receipt of that Letter, wherein the King's Orders were signified to you, not only to act vigorously in Defence of your Government, but to be likewise aiding and assisting His Majesty's other Colonies in America, to repel any hostile Attempts made against them ; I am now, by the King's express Command, to enforce to you the said Directions, in the strongest Manner, and to acquaint you, that His Majesty expects your immediate Observance of them."

1. This letter is printed entire in R. I. Col. Rec., vol. 5, p. 397.



Two Paragraphs of a Letter from the same Sir Thomas Robinson ; dated at Whitehall, the 26th of October, 1754, directed to the Governor and Company of Rhode-Island.<sup>1</sup>

“And cannot fail to excite you to exert yourself, and those under your Care, to take the most vigorous Steps to repel your common Danger, and to shew that the King’s Orders which were sent you last Year by the Earl of Holderness, and were renewed to you in my Letter of the 5th of July, have at last roused that Emulation and Spirit that every Man owes at this Time to His Majesty, the Public and himself. — But with Regard to such other Articles which are of a more general Concern, It is His Majesty’s Pleasure, That the same should be supplied by a common Fund, to be established for the Benefit of all the Colonies collectively, in North America : For which Purpose, you will use your utmost Endeavours, to induce the Assembly of your Province, to raise forthwith as large a Sum as can be afforded, as their Contribution to this common Fund, to be em-

1. This letter is printed entire in R. I. Col. Rec., vol. 5, pp. 406, 407, 408.



ployed provisionally, for the general Service of North-America, (particularly for paying the Charge of levying the Troops to make up the Complement of the Regiments above-mentioned) until such Time as a Plan of general Union of His Majesty's Northern Colonies, for their common Defence, can be perfected."





EXTRACTS  
FROM THE  
ORIGINAL RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF  
THE CONVENTION.

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THE first mention in the Records of the Convention of a Union of the Colonies, occurs on the 24th of June. The Convention had been in session five days.<sup>1</sup> Every entry in the records, relating to the Plan of Union, from the first entry of June 24, to and including July 8, is herein presented. The record of July 9, and all after that day, has been so accurately given in his "True Representation," by Mr. Hopkins, that it does not need repetition in this place. It is perhaps needless to say that this section

1. An original certified manuscript copy of the Record of the Proceedings of the Convention, was deposited in the office of the Secretary of State of Rhode Island. It is a folio, comprising forty-seven closely, but clearly written pages, the first seven of which comprise the commissions of the delegates.



of this Tract does not appear in Mr. Hopkins's pamphlet.

AT A MEETING AT THE COURT HOUSE, JUNE 24, P. M.

"A motion was made that the Commissioners deliver their Opinion whether a Union of all the Colonies is not at present absolutely necessary for their security and defence. The question was accordingly put, and it passed in the affirmative unanimously. His Honor, the Lieut. Gov. (De Lancey, of N. Y.) made a proposal as a branch of Indian affairs under the consideration of this Board, to build two Forts in the Indian country to protect them, their wives, and children, as the best expedient to secure their fidelity to His Majesty, which proposal the Board determined to proceed upon after they had considered some method of effecting the Union between the Colonies. On Motion, that a committee be appointed to prepare and receive Plans or Schemes for the Union of the Colonies and to digest them into one general Plan for the Inspection of the Board, Resolved, that each Government choose one of their



own number to be of that committee. Accordingly were appointed

Thomas Hutchinson, Esquire, for Massachusetts Bay.		
Theodore Atkinson,	“	“ New Hampshire.
William Pitkin,	“	“ Connecticut.
Stephen Hopkins,	“	“ Rhode Island.
Benjamin Franklin,	“	“ Pennsylvania.
Benjamin Tasker,	“	“ Maryland.

“It was left with his Honor to appoint one of His Majesty’s Council, for the Government of New York, and he named

• William Smith, Esquire, for New York.”

AT A MEETING AT THE COURT HOUSE, JUNE 28, P. M.

“The Committee appointed the 24th instant, to prepare and receive Plans or Schemes for the Union of the Colonies, presented short hints of a Scheme, for the purpose of which copies were taken by the commissioners of the respective Provinces.”

AT A MEETING AT THE COURT HOUSE, JUNE 29, P. M.

“The Hint of a scheme for the Union of the Colonies was debated on, but came to no conclusion.”



AT A MEETING AT THE COURT HOUSE, JULY 1, A. M.

"A motion was made that a committee should be appointed to draw up a Representation of the present state of the Colonies, which was agreed to, and the gentlemen who were appointed to prepare and receive Plans and Schemes for the Union of the Colonies, the 24th ulto., should be a committee for this purpose. The Plan for a Union of the Colonies was debated, but the Board came to no resolve upon it."

AT A MEETING AT THE COURT HOUSE, JULY 2, A. M.

"After debates held on the Plan of an Union, it was moved, if<sup>1</sup> the Board should proceed to form a Plan of Union of the Colonies to be established by an Act of Parliament. Whereupon it was moved to put the previous Question, which passed in the negative. The question was then put whether the Board should proceed to form a Plan of Union of the Colonies to be established by Act of Parliament, which passed in the affirmative."

1. This is correctly printed from the original manuscript. The meaning probably is, "Shall the Board proceed," etc.





AT A MEETING AT THE COURT HOUSE, JULY 4, 1754, A. M.

"The Plan for the Union of the Colonies was debated, but nothing finally determined on.<sup>1</sup> Same day, afternoon session: The Plan for a Union was further considered, but no resolves made thereupon."

AT A MEETING AT THE COURT HOUSE, JULY 5, 1754.

"(After a long time consumed in Indian speeches.) The Board then proceeded to consider the Plan for a Union, but did not go through with it."

AT A MEETING AT THE COURT HOUSE, JULY 8, 1754, P. M.

"The Board proceeded in their consideration upon a Plan for a Union, but did not go through with it."

AT A MEETING AT THE COURT HOUSE, JULY 9, 1754, A. M.

"The Plan of the Union was debated and agreed upon, and Mr. Franklin was desired to make a Draft

1. It is stated by Arnold, in his History of Rhode Island, vol. 2, p. 188, that this Plan of Union "was adopted by the delegates on the fourth day of July." Reference is made by Arnold, to Belknap's History of New Hampshire, wherein the same statement appears. (Vol. 2, p. 221. Boston, 1813.) This is not quite correct as shown by the Original Record; had it been the fact it would certainly have been a most singular coincidence.



of it, as now concluded upon. (Same day, afternoon session.) All the Commissioners being present except Mr. Franklin (absent by his appointment in the morning) the Draft of the Representation, &c., was read and considered, Paragraph by Paragraph, some amendments made, and the whole was agreed to and ordered to be minuted as follows."

Here we return to Mr. Hopkins's Pamphlet.

AT A MEETING, &c., ON TUESDAY, 9TH JULY, 1754.

PRESENT:

THE HON. THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NEW-YORK, AND  
THE FOUR GENTLEMEN OF THE COUNCIL OF NEW-YORK, AND  
ALL THE COMMISSIONERS, EXCEPT MR. FRANKLIN, ABSENT  
BY HIS APPOINTMENT IN THE MORNING.

"The Draught of the Representation,<sup>1</sup> &c., was read and considered, Paragraph by Paragraph, some Amendments made, and the whole was agreed to, and ordered to be minuted as follows :

"That His Majesty's Title to the Northern Conti-

1. The Representation, &c., means the present state of the Colonies referred to under the date of July 1. The entire document appears in the "True Representation," of Mr. Hopkins, as does everything else contained in the Original Record from this date.



ment of America, appears to be founded on the Discovery thereof first made, and the Possession thereof first taken in 1497, under a Commission from Henry the VIIth, of England, to Sebastian Cabot.

“That the French have possessed themselves of several Parts of this Continent, which by Treaties, have been ceded and confirmed to them: That the Rights of the English to the whole Sea Coast, from Georgia, on the South, to the River St. Lawrence, on the North, excepting the Island of Cape-Breton, in the Bay of St. Lawrence, remains plain and indisputable.

“That all the Lands or Countries Westward from the Atlantic Ocean to the South Sea, between 48 and 34 Degrees of North Latitude, were expressly included in the Grant of King James the First, to divers of his Subjects, so long since, as the Year 1606, and afterwards confirmed in 1620; and under this Grant, the Colony of Virginia claims an Extent as far West as to the South Sea; and the ancient Colonies of the Massachusetts-Bay and Connecticut, were by their respective Charters, made to extend to the said South Sea; so that not only the Right to the



Sea Coast, but to all the Inland Countries, from Sea to Sea, have at all Times been asserted by the Crown of England.

“That the Province of Nova Scotia or Accadia, hath known and determinate Bounds, by the original Grant from King James the First; and that there is abundant Evidence of the same, [and of the Knowledge] which the French had of these Bounds, while they were in Possession of it; and that these Bounds being thus known, the said Province by the Treaty of Utrecht, according to its antient Limits, was ceded to Great-Britain, and remained in Possession thereof, until the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, by which it was confirmed; but by said Treaty it is stipulated, That the Bounds of the said Province shall be determined by Commissioners, &c.

“That by the Treaty of Utrecht, the Country of the Five Cantons of the Iroquoise, is expressly acknowledged to be under the Dominion of the Crown of Great-Britain.

“That the Lake Champlain, formerly called Lake Iroquoise, and the Country Southward of it, as far as the Dutch or English Settlements, the Lake On-





tario, Erie, and all the Countries adjacent, have by all antient Authors, French and English, been allowed to belong to the Five Cantons or Nations; and the whole of those Countries, long before the said Treaty of Utrecht, were by the said Nations, put under the Protection of the Crown of Great-Britain.

"That by the Treaty of Utrecht, there is a Reserve to the French, a Liberty of frequenting the Countries of the Five Nations, and other Indians in Friendship with Great-Britain, for the Sake of Commerce; as there is also to the English, a Liberty of frequenting the Countries of those in Friendship with France, for the same Purpose.

"That after the Treaty of Utrecht, the French built several Fortresses in the Country of the Five Nations, and a very strong one at a Place called Crown-Point, to the South of the Lake Champlain.

"That the French Court have evidently, since the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, made this Northern Continent more than ever, the Object of its Attention.

"That the French have most unjustly taken Possession of a Part of the Province of Nova-Scotia;



and in the River St. John's, and other Parts of said Province, they have built strong Fortresses; and from this River they will have, during the Winter and Spring Season, a much easier Communication between France and Canada, than they have heretofore had, and will be furnished with a Harbour more commodiously situated for the Annoying the British Colonies by Privateers and Men of War, than Louisbourg itself.

"That they have taken Possession of, and begun a Settlement at the Head of the River Kennebeck, within the Bounds of the Province of Main, the most convenient Situation for affording Support, and a safe Retreat, to the Eastern Indians, in any of their Attempts upon the Governments of New-England.

"That it appears by the Information of the Natives, the French have been making Preparations for another Settlement, at a Place called Cohass, on Connecticut River, near the Head thereof, where 'tis but about ten Miles distant from a Branch of Merrimack River; and from whence, there is a very near and easy Communication with the Abnekais Indians,



who are settled on the River St. Francois, about forty Miles from the River St. Lawrence; and it is certain, the Inhabitants of New-Hampshire, in which Province this Cohass is supposed to lie, have been interrupted and impeded by the French Indians, from making any Settlement there.

"That since the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, the French have increased the Number of their Forts in the Country of the great Lakes, and on the Rivers which run into the Mississippi, and are securing a Communication between the two Colonies of Louisiana and Canada, and at the same Time, putting themselves into a Capacity of annoying the Southern British Colonies, and preventing any further Settlements of His Majesty's Dominions.

"That they have been gradually increasing their Troops in America, transporting them in their Ships of War, which return to France with a bare Complement of Men, leaving the rest in their Colonies; and by this Means, they are less observed by the Powers of Europe, than they would be, if Transports as usual heretofore, were provided for this Purpose.



"That they have taken Prisoners diverse of His Majesty's Subjects, trading in the Country of the Iroquoise, and other inland Parts, and plundered such Prisoners of several Thousand Pounds Sterling; and they are continually exciting the Indians to destroy or make Prisoners the Inhabitants of the Frontiers of the British Colonies; which Prisoners are carried to Canada, and a Price equal to what Slaves are sold in the Plantations, is demanded for their Redemption and Release.

"That they are continually drawing off the Indians from the British Interest, and have lately persuaded one Half of the Onondago Tribe, with many from the other Nations along with them, to remove to a Place called Oswegachie, on the River Cadaracqui, where they have built them a Church and Fort; and many of the Senecas, the most numerous Nation, appear to be wavering, and rather inclined to the French. And it is a melancholy Consideration, that not more than 150 Men of all the several Nations, have attended this Treaty, altho' they had Notice, that all the Governments would be here by





their Commissioners, and that a large Present would be given.

"That it is the evident Design of the French to surround the British Colonies, to fortify themselves on the Back thereof, to take and keep Possession of the Heads of all the important Rivers, to draw over the Indians to their Interest, and with the Help of such Indians, added to such Forces as are already arrived, and may be hereafter sent from Europe, to be in a Capacity of making a general Attack upon the several Governments; and if at the same Time, a strong Naval Force be sent from France, there is the utmost Danger, that the whole Continent will be subjected to that Crown: And that the Danger of such a Naval Force is not merely imaginary, may be argued from past Experience. For had it not been by the most extraordinary Interposition of Heaven, every Sea Port Town on the Continent, in the Year 1746, might have been ravaged and destroyed, by the Squadron under the Command of the Duke D'Anville, notwithstanding the then declining State of the French, and the very flourishing State of the



British Navy, and the further Advantage accruing to the English, from the Possession of Cape-Breton.

"That the French find by Experience, they are able to make greater and more secure Advantages upon their Neighbours, in Peace than in War. What they unjustly possessed themselves of, after the Peace of Utrecht, they now pretend they have a Right to hold, by Virtue of the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, until the true Boundary between the English and French be settled by Commissioners; but their Conquests made during War, they have been obliged to restore.

"That the French Affairs relative to this Continent, are under one Direction, and constantly regarded by the Crown and Ministry, who are not insensible how great a Stride they would make towards an Universal Monarchy, if the British Colonies were added to their Dominions, and consequently the whole Trade of North-America engrossed by them.

"That the said Colonies being in a divided, disunited State, there has never been any joint Exertion of their Force, or Council, to repel or defeat the Measures of the French; and particular Colonies are



unable and unwilling to maintain the Cause of the whole.

“That there has been a very great Neglect of the Affairs of the Iroquoise, as they are commonly called, the Indians of the Six Nations, and their Friendship and Alliance has been improved to private Purposes, for the Sake of the Trade with them, and the Purchase or Acquisition of their Lands, more than the Public Services.

“That they are supplied with Rum by the Traders, in vast and almost incredible Quantities; the Laws of the Colonies now in Force, being insufficient to restrain the Supply. And the Indians of every Nation, are frequently drunk, and abused in their Trade, and their Affections thereby alienated from the English; they often wound and murder one another in their Liquor, and to avoid Revenge, fly to the French; and perhaps more have been lost by these Means, than by the French Artifice.

“That Purchases of Land from the Indians by private Persons, for small trifling Considerations, have been the Cause of great Uneasiness and Discontents; and if the Indians are not in fact imposed on and in-



jured, yet they are apt to think they have been ; and indeed, they appear not fit to be entrusted at Large, with the Sale of their own Lands : And the Laws of some of the Colonies, which make such Sales void, unless the Allowance of the Government be first obtained, seem to be well founded.

"That the Granting or Patenting vast Tracts of Land to private Persons or Companies, without Conditions of speedy Settlements, has tended to prevent the Strengthening the Frontiers of the particular Colony where such Tracts lie, and been Prejudicial to the rest.

"That it seems absolutely necessary, that speedy and effectual Measures be taken, to secure the Colonies from the Slavery they are threatened with : that any farther Advances of the French should be prevented ; and the Encroachments already made, removed.

"That the Indians in Alliance or Friendship with the English, be constantly regarded under some wise Direction or Superintendancy. That Endeavours be used for the Recovery of those Indians who are lately gone over to the French, and for securing those





that remain. That some discreet Person or Persons be appointed to reside constantly among each Nation of Indians ; such Person to have no Concern in Trade, and duly to communicate all Advices to the Superintendants.

"That the Trade with the said Indians be well regulated, and made subservient to the Public Interest, more than to private Gain.

"That there be Forts built for the Security of each Nation, and the better carrying on the Trade with them. That warlike Vessels be provided, sufficient to maintain His Majesty's Right to a free Navigation on the several Lakes.

"That all future Purchases of Lands from the Indians be void, unless made by the Government where such Lands lie, and from the Indians in a Body, in their public Councils. That the Patentees or Possessors of large unsettled Territories, be enjoined to cause them to be settled in a reasonable Time, on Pain of Forfeiture.

"That the Complaints of the Indians, relative to any Grants or Possessions of their Lands, fraudulently obtained, be inquired into, and all Injuries redressed.



"That the Bounds of those Colonies which extend to the South Seas, be contracted and limited by the Alleghenny or Apalachian Mountains; and that Measures be taken, for settling from time to time, Colonies of His Majesty's Protestant Subjects, Westward of said Mountains, in convenient Cantons, to be assigned for that Purpose. And finally, that there be an Union of His Majesty's several Governments on the Continent, that so their Councils, Treasure, and Strength, may be employed in due Proportion, against their common Enemy." All which is submitted.

AT A MEETING IN THE COURT-HOUSE AT ALBANY, ON WEDNESDAY, THE 10TH OF JULY, 1754, P. M.

PRESENT:

THE HON. JAMES DE LANCEY, ESQ., LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF THE PROVINCE OF NEW-YORK: JOSEPH MURRAY, WILLIAM JOHNSON, JOHN CHAMBERS, AND WILLIAM SMITH, ESQRS., OF THE COUNCIL OF THE SAID PROVINCE OF NEW-YORK.

COMMISSIONERS FOR THE SEVERAL STATES.

"Samuel Wells, John Chandler, Thomas Hutchinson, Oliver Partridge, and John Worthington, Esqrs., for the Massachusetts.



"Theodore Atkinson, Richard Wibird, Mesheo Weare, and Henry Sherburne, jun., Esqrs., for New-Hampshire.

"William Pitkin, Roger Wolcott, jun., and Elisha Williams, Esqrs., for Connecticut.

"Stephen Hopkins and Martin Howard, jun., Esqrs., for Rhode-Island.

"Benjamin Tasker, jun., and Abraham Barnes, Esqrs., for Maryland.

"John Penn, Richard Peters, Isaac Norris, and Benjamin Franklin, Esqrs., for Pennsylvania.

"The Consideration of the Plan of an Union was resumed; which Plan is as follows:

"Plan of a proposed Union of the several Colonies of Massachusetts-Bay, New-Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode-Island, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North-Carolina, and South-Carolina, for their mutual Defence and Security, and for the Extending the British Settlements in North-America.

"That humble Application be made for an Act of the Parliament of Great-Britain, by Virtue of which One General Government may be formed in Ameri-



ca, including all the said Colonies ; within and under which Government, each Colony may retain its present Constitution, except in the Particulars wherein a Change may be directed by the said Act, as hereafter follows.

“ That the said General Government be administered by a President General, to be appointed and supported by the Crown ; and a Grand Council, to be chosen by the Representatives of the People of the several Colonies, met in their respective Assemblies.

“ That within      Months after the Passing of such Act, the House of Representatives in the several Assemblies, that happen to be fitting within that Time, or that shall be especially for that Purpose convened, may and shall chuse Members for the Grand Council, in the following Proportions ; that is to say :

Massachusetts-Bay,	7	Pennsylvania,	6
New-Hampshire,	2	Maryland,	4
Connecticut,	5	Virginia,	7
Rhode-Island,	2	North-Carolina,	4
New-York,	4	South Carolina,	4
New-Jersey,	3		—
			48





"Who shall meet for the first Time at the City of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, being called by the President General, as soon as conveniently may be, after his Appointment.

"That there shall be a new Election of Members for the Grand Council every three Years; and on the Death or Resignation of any Member, his Place shall be supplied by a new Choice, at the next Sitting of the Assembly of the Colony he represented.

"That after the first three Years, when the Proportion of Money arising out of each Colony to the General Treasury, can be known, the Number of Members to be chosen for each Colony, shall from time to time, in all ensuing Elections, be regulated by that Proportion (yet so as that the Number to be chosen by any one Province, be not more than seven, nor less than two).

"That the Grand Council shall meet once in every Year, and oftener if Occasion require, at such Time and Place as they shall adjourn to at the last preceding Meeting, or as they shall be called to meet at by the President General on any Emergency; he having first obtained in writing, the Consent of



seven of the Members to such Call, and sent due and timely Notice to the whole.

"That the Grand Council have Power to chuse their Speaker, and shall neither be dissolved, prorogued, nor continue sitting longer than six Weeks at one Time, without their own Consent, or the special Command of the Crown.

"That the Members of the Grand Council shall be allowed for their Service, Ten Shillings Sterling per Diem, during their Session and Journey to and from the Place of Meeting, twenty Miles to be reckoned a Day's Journey.

"That the Assent of the President General be requisite to all Acts of the Grand Council; and that it be his Office and Duty to cause them to be carried into Execution.

"That the President General, with the Advice of the Grand Council, hold or direct all Indian Treaties, in which the general Interest or Welfare of the Colonies may be concerned; and to make Peace or declare War with Indian Nations. That they make such Laws as they judge necessary for regulating all Indian Trade. That they make all Purchases from



Indians for the Crown, of the Lands now not within the Bounds of particular Colonies, or that shall not be within their Bounds, when some of them are reduced to more convenient Dimensions. That they make new Settlements on such Purchases, by granting Lands in the King's Name, reserving a Quit-Rent to the Crown for the Use of the General Treasury.

"That they make Laws for regulating and governing such new Settlements, 'till the Crown shall think fit to form them into particular Governments.

"That they may raise and pay Soldiers, and build Forts for the Defence of any of the Colonies, and equip Vessels of Force to guard the Coast, and protect the Trade on the Ocean, Lakes, or great Rivers ; but they shall not impress Men in any Colony, without the Consent of its Legislature.

"That for those Purposes, they have Power to make Laws, and lay and levy such general Duties, Imposts, or Taxes, as to themselves appear most equal and just, considering the Ability and other Circumstances of the Inhabitants in the several Colonies, and such as may be collected with the least In-



convenience to the People; rather discouraging Luxury, than loading Industry with unnecessary Burthens.

“That they may appoint a general Treasurer and a particular Treasurer in each Government, when necessary; and from time to time, may order the Sums in the Treasuries of each Government, into the General Treasury, or draw on them for special Payments, as they find most convenient; yet no Money to issue, but by joint Orders of the President General and Grand Council, except where Sums have been appropriated to particular Purposes, and the President General is previously empowered by an Act, to draw for such Sums.

“That the general Accounts shall be yearly settled, and reported to the several Assemblies.

“That a Quorum of the Grand Council, empowered to act with the President General, do consist of Twenty-five Members; among whom there shall be one or more from a Majority of the Colonies.

“That the Laws made by them for the Purposes aforesaid, shall not be repugnant, but as near as may be agreeable, to the Laws of England, and shall be





transmitted to the King in Council, for Approbation, as soon as may be, after their passing; and if not disapproved within three Years after Presentation, to remain in Force.

“That in Case of the Death of the President General, the Speaker of the Grand Council for the Time being, shall succeed, and be vested with the same Power and Authorities, and continue 'till the King's Pleasure be known.

“That all Military Commission Officers, whether for Land or Sea Service, to act under this General Constitution, be nominated by the President General, but the Approbation of the Grand Council is to be obtained, before they receive their Commissions. And all Civil Officers are to be nominated by the Grand Council, and to receive the President General's Approbation, before they officiate. But in Case of Vacancy, by Death or Removal of any Officer, Civil or Military, under this Constitution, the Governor of the Provinces in which such Vacancy happens, may appoint, 'till the Pleasure of the President General and Grand Council can be known.

“That the particular Military as well as Civil Es-



tablishments in each Colony, remain in their present State, this General Constitution notwithstanding; and that on sudden Emergencies, any Colony may defend itself, and lay the Accounts of Expence thence arisen, before the President General and Grand Council, who may allow and order Payment of the same, as far as they judge such Accounts just and reasonable.

After Debate on the foregoing Plan :

"RESOLVED, That the Commissioners from the several Governments, be desired to lay the same before their respective Constituents, for their Consideration; and that the Secretary to this Board, transmit a Copy thereof, with this Vote thereon, to the Governor of each of the Colonies, which have not sent their Commissioners to this Congress.

"ORDERED, That all His Majesty's Governments on this Continent, may have Liberty from time to time, to take Copies of the Proceedings of this Congress, or any Parts thereof, paying for the same; and that no other Copies be delivered by the Secretary."



The Board continued in session until the 11th of July, and then His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor of New-York, and the Commissioners of the several Governments, rose without any further adjournments.

MR. HOPKINS

ENTERS UPON HIS PERSONAL DEFENCE.

Thus having seen Abstracts of the Authorities given the Commissioners who were at Albany, and of those Letters from the Crown, which occasioned such Authorities to be given; together with the State of the British and French Colonies in America, and the proposed Plan of Union, formed in Consequence of the whole: From an impartial View thereof, let every Man judge, Whether it was not the Intent of all the Colonies who sent Commissioners, that they should form some General Scheme or Plan, for the Safety and Defence of the English Colonies, and the Indians in their Alliance? Look into the Commission from Governor Greene; and after full Powers are given to do every Thing relative to the Indians in Alliance with us, What mean



these following Words? "And also, what else may be necessary to prohibit the French, and their Allies the Indians, from encroaching on the Lands within the Dominions of His Majesty. And in general, as far as the Abilities of this Government will permit, to act in Conjunction with the said Commissioners, in every Thing necessary for the Good of His Majesty's Subjects in these Parts. And to answer as far as we can, the Designs of His Majesty's Instructions to this Colony, communicated to us by the Earl of Holderness." Surely such Words as these, have some Meaning; and if the Commissioners were so unhappy as quite to mistake their Meaning, let those penetrating Wits who think so, shew to the World, how they are to be understood. But if those Authorities were too extensive, let them be blamed who gave such Authorities, and not those who executed them in the most sparing Manner possible. And will any Man believe, such exact Likeness in Substance, should be in the Authorities given by every Government to to their Commissioners, without having any Conference together about it, if the Directions from the Crown had not pointed it out to them





in so plain a Manner, that they all understood them alike? And is it not as plain, from the Letters since received from the Secretaries of State, that they all understood them in the Sense the King intended them?

Altho' all this were allowed, yet some may say, If you had Powers given you to enter into some such General Scheme, you ought not to have consented to one so hurtful and destructive of our Liberties as this is! Whether the Plan formed at Albany, be a good one, or a bad one, I shall not undertake to determin; yet let it be considered, that the Rhode-Island Commissioners were but two of the whole Number, and therefore were far from being able to govern or form Things as they might think best; neither did they ever pretend they could not be mistaken; and Errors of Judgment will always be forgiven by Men of Candor.

And now let us examin what the Commissioners did relating to this Plan, and we shall find, they did no more than form it, and agree to lay it before the General Assemblies of the Colonies from whence they came, for their Consideration. They did not,



as is falsely asserted, order it to be sent home. They did not establish it as an Act or Ordinance of the Board of Commissioners, as they all might have done, by the Authorities given them. They did not leave it in the Power of any one to obtain a Copy of it, and send it Home; but strictly forbid their Secretary to give any Copy, except to the Colonies. Nor did they ever agree to any Thing more, than to carry it to their respective Governments, and lay it before their Constituents. And agreeable to the Resolve of the Board of Commissioners, those from Rhode-Island, did lay this Plan, with all other their Proceedings at Albany, before the General Assembly, at their Session in August last, for their Consideration. Was this criminal! Was this betraying their Trust! Or was there any Thing more in this, than their Duty! Even Envy and Ignorance joined together, cannot say there was! And those who have been bold enough to assert, That any Thing more relating to this Plan of Union, was done, suffered to be done, or connived at, by the Commissioners, are hereby publicly called upon, to prove their Assertions, or confess their Falshood.



Once more, let us hold up this so much talked of Plan of Union, and view it in another Light: And here, to do my Adversaries all the Justice they can possibly desire, I will, for Argument-sake, confess it to be as bad as they represent it to be. Viewing it in this Light, it must be found contrary to, and subversive of our happy Constitution, and all those valuable Privileges we enjoy under it. This destructive Plan was laid before the General Assembly, for their Consideration, in the Month of August last: This gave an Opportunity to those Patriots belonging to the Council, who now say so much against this Plan, to have exerted themselves in Defence of our Liberties, so much in Danger, and prevented the Dismal Effects so much feared. Well! What have these Champions for Liberty, done in this Matter? Have they not let it lie before the Assembly between six and seven Months, without taking it once under Consideration? Or, Have they ever rejected it? or so much as once in all this Time, moved to have one Word wrote Home, to prevent its taking Place? Was it bad, as they say 'tis, then certainly 'twas their Duty to have done all in their



Power to prevent its taking Effect. All Men must confess, the Plan was either good or bad; if 'twas good, Why do they blame it? if 'twas bad, Why have they done Nothing about it?

Now, let every sober-minded Man determin, Whether these Men can be real Friends to the Colony, who placed in the foremost Offices, and intrusted with its Safety, could let a Thing so dangerous to its Interest, lie unobserved by the General Assembly, near seven Months, 'till perhaps it may be too late to prevent it? And then to serve a private Party Turn, suddenly to roar out, The Colony is in Danger! All who have Eyes, will see thro' such thin Disguises, and be assured, that the Designs of those Men, are only to blast the Reputation of one of the Rhode-Island Commissioners, who at present may seem to stand in their Way, and not to do the Colony any Service; for if that had been the Case, they would have told us these Things sooner.

What could the Commissioners for Rhode-Island have done more? or what could they have done less than they did, relative to this Plan? It was not in their Power to procure a better; and whether it was





good or bad, it was equally their Duty to lay it before the Assembly who sent them: They did so, and did no more; and every Member of both Houses of Assembly can bear Witness, I have never used the least Endeavour to induce them to accede to it. If it is bad, as some are pleas'd to represent it, Must not every Man say, They who have suffered it to lie thus long, are the very Men who have betrayed their Trust, and the Interest of the Colony?

Real want of Merit occasions these Men's Endeavour to rise upon the Ruin of their Neighbour's Reputation. But can the Faults of my Neighbour, make me fit for an Office? And can the valuable Privileges of this Colony be safe in those Hands, where every Thing else seems to be neglected, but what will serve their private Purposes? As I am a Candidate for an Office, I sincerely desire all Men may put their Country's Interest in the first Place, and give their Votes only where they think 'tis most safe; and assure themselves, such a Conduct will perfectly please the Colony's, and their Friend,

STEPHEN HOPKINS.

PROVIDENCE, MARCH 29, 1755.



A  
Short R E P L Y

TO

Mr. *Stephen Hopkins's* VINDICATION, and  
false Reflections against the Governor and  
Council of the Colony of *Rhode - Island,*  
&c.

BY

PHILOLETHES.

RHODE ISLAND, APRIL TENTH,

1755.



LET the Reader in the first Place, observe, the above named Gentleman introduces his pompous Piece, with Abstracts of the Authorities given by the several Governments to their Commissioners, and of several Letters from the Secretaries of State, together with a Representation of the State of the English and French Colonies in North-America; and then proceeds to his sophistical Arguments, to clear himself from Imputation of Guilt, with Respect to his Conduct at Albany, and false Charges against the Heads of the Legislature; and concludes with his ungentleman-like Reflections upon all who shall animadvert.

In the first Place, the Public may be assured, that the above named Gentleman has grossly abused them, by printing only particular Paragraphs of the Commissions given by the several Governors to the Commissioners, in order to deceive his Readers, neg-



lecting whatever Words or Sentences did not answer his Purpose. To demonstrate the Gentleman's Fallacy, I shall only mention one Paragraph in the Commission given by Horatio Sharpe, Esq., Governor of Maryland, to the Commissioners of that Province, which is as follows: "But you are to understand, that you are not impowered to stipulate or engage, that this Province will advance any Sum of Money, or Number of Men, towards erecting Forts, or garrisoning them, or to such Purposes; but you shall only well observe, what Proposals are made by the other Commissioners, and endeavour to learn how far the Execution of what they may propose, can be necessary or useful, and consider well the Reasonableness of any such Propositions, and to make Return, &c." This is what the above-named Gentleman has not printed; and if any Gentleman will give himself the Trouble to examin the original Commissions in the Secretary's Office, he will find, that such Parts as are not for his Purpose, he has omitted; and yet this Gentleman has the Front to assert in his 13th pag.<sup>1</sup> referring to the Plan formed

1. Ante, p. 42.





at Albany, That "they did not establish it as an Act or Ordinance of the Board of Commissioners, as they all might have done, by the Authorities given them;" which last Sentence is false in fact.

SECONDLY: His printing Paragraphs of the Letters from the Ministers of State to the several Governments, is to insinuate to his Readers, that His Majesty and the Ministers of State had ordered them, or at least expected that such a Plan should be established, which is contrary to Magna Charta. I am perswaded, the British Parliament were surprised that the Governments should petition for a Confirmation of a Plan, which, the Instant it was established, would revoke all His Majesty's Governors Commissions in North-America, and destroy every Charter, by erecting a Power above Law, over the several Legislatures. [NOTE.—Some of the Letters from the Ministry, were dated Octob. 26, which was after the Plan got Home, and was the Foundation of said Letters.]<sup>1</sup>

THIRDLY: As to the Representation of the State of the English and French Colonies in North-Ameri-

1. Mr. Hopkins expressly states this fact. Ante, p. 42.



ca, we are all sensible, that if the French are suffered to do what they please, they will soon increase their Numbers, and put themselves into such a Position, as to annoy and disturb the English Colonies ; and the only Union of the Inhabitants of the several Governments, is true Protestant Principles, which leads them forth to fight for their King and Country freely, without Force or Compulsion, and therefore we want no arbitrary supream sovereign Court of Jurisdiction over a free People, to lay Taxes, Imposts, and Duties upon our Land, Trade, and Merchandize ; but are ready, when our most gracious Sovereign commands, to oppose the common Enemy, and not desist, till there are any to trouble us or our Posterity. But what good End will be answered, for the Governments to be obliged to conform to this Plan of Union ? Why this ; a Number of mercenary Gentlemen will heap to themselves Riches out of the public Stock ; and those Gentlemen who have purchased all the Lands to the Rivers and Lakes, when the Colonies have built a Row of Forts, and are at the Expence of keeping a standing Army in them, which may cost the smallest Colony



Ten Thousand Pounds Sterling per Annum, will enhance their Estates to ten Times their present Value, and build them convenient Houses for the Fur Trade, at the several Government's Expence.

FOURTHLY: We are now come to the Plan of Union; in which the Names of those who compos'd this august Congress, are first inserted, and then the several Governments: And here observe, they say, "That humble Application be made for an Act of Parliament of Great-Britain, by Virtue of which, One General Government may be formed in America, &c." Now, How was this Application to be made? It is not said, That humble Application be made by the several Governments, if they acceded to said Plan; nor was the President of said Congress at Albany, ordered (by any Thing that appears) to wait any fix'd Time, to receive the Assent or Dissent of the several Governments; nor have the Governments been informed by that Congress that they ever designed to wait their Consent to said Plan; And how improbable is it, that they ever designed to wait for the Governments Resolve, when neither Time, Place, nor Person was pointed out to



receive the Governments Answer; Notwithstanding, the Plan is at Home, and by our Agent's<sup>1</sup> Letter, before the Parliament for Confirmation.

FIFTHLY: In his sophistical Arguments to clear himself from the Imputation of Guilt, with Respect to his Conduct at Albany, in the 12th pag.<sup>2</sup> he makes an artful Flourish, by saying, "Thus having seen Abstracts of the Authorities given the Commissioners, and those Letters which occasioned such Authorities; the State of the British and French Colonies, the Plan formed in Consequence thereof: Now let every Man judge, &c." All which did not empower him to introduce an Authority over our Legislature, so as to destroy our Charter,<sup>3</sup> as said Plan

1. Mr. Richard Partridge, a member of the Society of Friends, was the Agent for the Colony of Rhode Island in London. He was an able and judicious friend to it. He died in 1730, having for thirty-four years served the Colony in the capacity of its agent. The letter here referred to by Philoletes, has not been printed, so far as the Publisher knows. It was a few months since in its proper volume at the office of the Secretary of State, and it was the intention of the Publisher to reproduce it at this point, but on examination of the volume it was found to have been recently abstracted. Its purport was to state the fact that the Plan had reached London, and to ask instructions concerning his conduct in reference to it. An extract from it appears on page 59.

2. Ante, p. 40. Very incorrectly quoted.

3. The Declaration of Independence, which took place twenty-two years later, did not destroy this Charter. It continued to be the supreme law of the State of Rhode Island, until 1842.





virtually doth. I shall pass to pag. 13,<sup>1</sup> where the Gentleman saith, "Whether the Plan formed at Albany, be a good one or a bad one, I shall not undertake to determin"; but forgets himself in pag. 14,<sup>2</sup> and says, "All Men must confess the Plan was either good or bad." What Authority has this Gentleman above all others, that every Man must confess the Plan was either good or bad? No doubt to conceal his own Sentiments; should he declare it a good Plan, he might be apprehensive of incurring the Displeasure of the People in general: if a bad one, he must sacrifice his Honor and Reputation with those Gentlemen, who with him, approved of said Plan at Albany. He goes on, and says, "What could the Commissioners for Rhode-Island have done more? or what could they have done less than they did, relative to this Plan? It was not in their Power to procure a better; and whether it was good or bad, it was equally their Duty to lay it before the Assembly, &c." What Authority, or what Right had this Gentleman to bring any Plan from Albany? If he could not bring a good one, he might have done

1. Ante, p. 42. 2. Ante, p. 45.



less, and brought none, by rejecting it. We have bad Schemes enough in the Colony of Rhode-Island, without bringing more into it. "Let it be considered (says he) the Rhode-Island Commissioners were but two of the whole Number," which consisted of Twenty-seven. Now, upon a Supposition, that the Plan is established at Home, then Rhode-Island is to have Two out of Forty-eight; and if Forty six of the Grand Council should consent to lay Ten Thousand Pounds Sterling per Annum, upon our Colony, being but Two, it is not in their Power to prevent it. But I desire to know, Whether it was not in the Power of our sagacious Commissioners to protest against said Plan, or [as] those worthy Patriots to their Government, the Commissioners of Connecticut did? It was far from a good Plea, for consenting to said Plan, because but Two in Number; if but One, he might have left it, and acquainted the other Commissioners, That his Government did [not] authorize him to dispose of the Government, and bring a Deed of Conveyance for them to sign.

SIXTHLY: This penetrating, judicious Gentleman, proceeds to his false Charges against the



Heads of the Legislature, and concludes with Reflections, which every candid Person must treat with Contempt, in pag. 14.<sup>1</sup> "This destructive Plan (he says) was laid before the General Assembly, in the Month of August last: This gave an Opportunity to those Patriots belonging to the Council, who now say so much against this Plan, to have exerted themselves, &c. Well! What have these Champions for Liberty done in this Matter? Have they not let it lie before the Assembly between six and seven Months, without taking it once under Consideration? Or, Have they ever rejected it? or so much as once in all this Time, moved to have one Word wrote Home, to prevent it; and then to serve a private Party Turn, suddenly to roar out, The Colony is in Danger! &c." What Education the afore-named Gentleman had in his Minority, I know not; but this I know, it is far beneath the Character of a well-bred Gentleman to assert Falshoods against the Heads of a Government, and make no Distinction between them and the lowest Peasants. That this Gentleman has falsly accused the Governor and

1. Ante, p. 44.



Council, the Records will make appear; and the Lower House can witness against him. I shall therefore observe the Measures taken by the Governor and Council, from time to time, relating to this Plan. In August last, this cunning Gentleman presented to the General Assembly, a Number of Sheets in Folio, in which were contained a Variety of Matters, and the Plan of Union artfully tack'd<sup>1</sup> to the rest, which being read in the Lower House, the Report was received, and in Consequence, all their Doings, &c. No doubt, some Advocates, of Mr. Hopkins's, discovered the Absurdity of said Plan, which they conceal'd, to prevent any Reflections on his Character: However, the Vote of the Lower House was sent to the Governor and Council, who perceived the Fraud, of the Plan's being included with their other Proceedings, and acquainted the Lower House. That they concur'd with their Vote, reserving a further Consideration upon the Plan of Union.

1. The report submitted by the Commissioners on their return, forms no part of the Record of the Commissioners. Both documents can be seen in the office of the Secretary of State. They do not appear to have ever been joined together. Of what offence Mr. Hopkins was guilty in submitting the Plan, we cannot now discover. It would have been an insult to all parties had he not done so.





The Lower House confessed the Reserve just. Many important Affairs lying before the Assembly, at their Session in October following, prevented the Council from proceeding to a further Consideration of the Plan of Union; and had no Suspicion of its being sent Home, without the Privity of the other Colonies; however, in December, Governor Greene receiv'd a Letter from the Agent, dated Octob. 9, 1754, with the following Words contain'd therein: "The Parliament is like to meet for Dispatch of Business, in about six Weeks Time, when I am apt to think, some Application will be made to them, respecting the Union of the several Governments in North-America, Proposals for that Purpose being lately come to hand, as they were agreed on by the Congress at Albany, &c." This Information surprised the Governor,<sup>1</sup> who in February Session, presented to the Council the said Letter, and being re-

1. Why Governor Greene should have been surprised at the fact of sending to the Home Government the report of the Doings of a Board of Commissioners, which the Home Government itself had directed to be held, "Philoleties" does not state, but he does say the Governor received the letter from Richard Partridge, the Colonial Agent, in December, 1754. He made no communication of his surprise until the following March, notwithstanding the Assembly had held sessions in January, February and March.



solved to have something done, laid the Letter before the Lower House, to induce them to pass a Vote for a Letter to be sent Home, in order to prevent establishing the said Plan: But a Gentleman, zealously attach'd to Mr. Hopkins, made Application to one of the Council, begging that they would not reject the Plan, which would be a Dishonor to the Commissioners. Any Gentleman may discover the Reason why some of the Lower House made use of every Artifice to prevent the Plan from being deliberated on, and no Vote obtain'd from the Lower House in February Session, concerning the same. The Governor and Council being dissatisfied therewith, in March following (when the Assembly met) sent to the Lower House, the following Resolve in writing, viz.:

“ TO THE HOUSE OF DEPUTIES.

“ GENTLEMEN:

“ WHEREAS the Plan proposed at the Congress at Albany last Summer, in order to an Union of His Majesty's Northern Colonies, for their common Defence, was not acceded to, when presented unto the General Assembly in August, but by them reserved



for a further Consideration. And now this House having duly examined and considered said Plan, do find the same to be a Scheme, which if carried into Execution, will virtually deprive this Government, at least, of some of its most valuable Privileges, if not effectually overturn and destroy our present happy Constitution; Wherefore, it is strongly recommended to you, Gentlemen, That an authentic Copy of all the Proceedings at Albany, be made out, and sent forthwith to our Agent in Great-Britain, with Instructions, That he exert himself to the utmost, in order to prevent the said Plan of Union, or any Thing contain'd therein, to the Purport or Effect thereof, being carried or passed into an Act of the Parliament of Great-Britain. †

Voted and past per Order,

THOMAS WARD Secy." 1.

1. Philoletes says this communication of Governor Greene's was sent to the Upper House in March (1775). It passed the Upper House, and was sent to the Lower House, where it was stopped by the friends of Mr. Hopkins. This was seven months after the Report of the Commissioners and the Plan had been submitted, and during those seven months the Assembly had held five sessions, viz., August, October, January, February and March, so that Mr. Hopkins seems not to be far out of the way. So far as the Editor can discover, this document exists in no other place. No mention of it is made in the original records of the Colony.



Every Gentleman may now judge, Whether the Governor and Council have not once moved, in six or seven Months, concerning the said Plan? and, Whether they merited such indecent Language as this Gentleman has taken the Freedom to treat them with. In his 14th pag.<sup>1</sup> there is a gross Reflection on the Governor and Council, which ought not to be pass'd over in Silence, where he says, "Can the valuable Privileges of this Colony, be safe in those Hands, where every Thing else seems to be neglected, but what will serve their private Purposes, &c." I shall here put this Gentleman in mind of the many Neglects he has been guilty of, which the Records of the Colony will evince. Was he not appointed one of a Committee near three Years past, to prepare the Case of the Northern Boundary Line, and present the same to the Governor, which he has neglected to this Day, tho' repeatedly called upon by the Governor, and those concerned?<sup>2</sup> Did not this Gen

1. Ante, p. 46.

2. Mr. Hopkins was appointed to this important position in October, 1748, and his report was made in April, 1752. (R. I. Col. Rec., vol. 5, p. 347.) The matter was not again disturbed until 1769, when Moses Brown petitioned to have the case re-opened. In 1771, Henry Marchant, the Attorney General, was sent to England, in connection with sundry matters, among others was this vexed question of the Northern Boundary.





tleman undertake to form a Letter near two Years past, to send to our Agent, in order to recover our Privileges in making Paper Money, and amused the People, that he would even go Home himself, if the Letter had not the proper effect? all which he has neglected.<sup>1</sup> Let him also remember, how he engaged in May last, to settle the Colony's Accounts with Mr. Brenton (which has occasioned so much Uneasiness in the Government) promising, That he would devote himself to the same; and tho' he has frequently been urg'd by the Assembly to finish it, has not yet found Time.<sup>2</sup> How he undertook to answer the Earl of Holderness's and Sir Thomas Robin-

1. Unfortunately the privileges of the Colony in making Paper Money were never taken away, and there does not appear to be need of an effort to recover that which had not been lost. Mr. Hopkins was appointed one of the committee to prepare the Report of 1749. He was appointed to this position in October, 1749. The Report was made at the next February Session, 1750. There had been no intervening session. In June, 1751, Mr. Hopkins was appointed one of a "committee to examine the facts contained in a petition" concerning the issue of Banks. His report was made during the same session.—R. I. Hist. Tract, No. 8, p. 88.

2. In August, 1755, a committee consisting of Thomas Cranston, James Sheffield and Benjamin Nichols, Esquires, was appointed to settle the "controversy which hath so long subsisted" with Jahleel Brenton Esq., and to receive from him whatever appeared to be due from him to the Colony. Jahleel Brenton, the father of the above (and possibly the son also), had been a borrower from the Colony, of money issued at sundry times in the various Banks.



son's Letters, and a Letter from this Government for Canon, &c. &c., all which he has neglected, tho' our Liberties, Properties, and whatever we esteem valuable, depended upon the Performance of them. And the Inhabitants of this Colony must be sensible, that this Gentleman is over fond of having all Matters of Consequence committed to his Management; and has his Admirers in the Assembly, who (contrary to Decency and good Manners) nominate this Man of Wisdom, in Opposition to every other Man, tho' he gives himself little concern about any Thing, except in agreeing to the Plan of Union, expecting, at least, to be a Member of the Grand Council.

I shall now conclude, with observing to the In-

This money was never repaid. The bonds and mortgages given by him to the Colony for these loans still remain in the office of the General Treasurer, unpaid. No end of vexatious questions were raised to prevent a settlement, and none was ever made. In 1775 the son left Newport, and joined the British against the Colonies. His estates were confiscated. He entered the British Navy, and was given the command of the Frigate Tortoise, 32 guns, which ship was, in March, 1778, on the Rhode Island coast.

1. No greater compliment could be given to Mr. Hopkins than this schedule of very important matters confided to him by his fellow members of the General Assembly. This confidence began, however, long before any of the measures here mentioned, and was continued until the death of the aged statesman, in 1785.



habitants of this Colony, wherein this Gentleman has endeavour'd to impose on them. 1. By omitting Paragraphs in the several Commissions, which might frustrate his Designs. 2. His inserting Paragraphs of the Letters from our Prime Ministers, to insinuate, that they had them at Albany to form the Plan by, when those Paragraphs in Sir Thomas Robinson's Letter of Octob. 26, was wrote when the Plan got Home. 3. His publishing the State of the English and French Colonies, to justify the forming said Plan, yet does not acknowledge, whether he approves or disapproves thereof; altho' in his Defence, he ingenuously confesses, that he was concerned in the Forming of it. 4. His asserting the Plan was laid before the Assembly between six and seven Months, without the least Notice being taken of it by the Council. 5. His Vindication of his Conduct at Albany, proves him guilty of what he dare not own nor deny. 6. His indecent Reflections against the Governor and Council, should excite every Man in the Colony to resent, and treat with the Contempt it deserves.

All which is submitted, by

PHILOLETHES.

RHODE-ISLAND, APRIL 10, 1755.



## SPECIAL NOTICE

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